



**Mayor's Award for Historic Preservation
The Carrot Seed Kitchen Co.
"Excellence in Rehabilitation"
310 Main Avenue**

The Carrot Seed Kitchen Co. located at 310 Main Avenue was originally built in 1928 as a grocery store called the Economy Center Market. Many may remember it became The Red Owl Grocery Store around 1952, and it stayed a grocery store until 1967 when it became The Index. In 1986, Cover to Cover took over, and it remained that way until Kirsten and Mike Gjesdal purchased it in June of 2017 to become the new location of The Carrot Seed Kitchen Co.

The Carrot Seed Kitchen Co. is a retail store specializing in kitchenware and local and gourmet foods. The kitchen store originally opened June 2015 in downtown Brookings. Hoping to be a landmark in the Brookings community, The Carrot Seed prides itself on being a resource for quality kitchen tools and tasty ingredients for cooking.



Kirsten along with her husband Mike began the process of bringing the building up to date directly after they made the purchase. The process began with stripping it down, removing some closets and a couple of walls to open up the space.

Some of the improvements made included replacing the roof along with bringing the electrical up to code. A door was added to the back of the building to provide a rear entrance, and the windows in the front and back were replaced. There was a hole from a freight elevator in the back

corner of the building where flooring needed to be redone as well. The original maple floor was refinished, taking countless hours of pulling nails, sanding and sealing. The project was finished with new lights, fans, new drywall and a fresh coat of paint.

During the remodel, there were several nostalgic items uncovered from years past. Hand written notes on the wall by employees in an area Kirsten believes the phone was once located. Part of the original floor was patched with a hammered down, now vintage, Hershey's tin can and if you look closely at the floor you can still see where the isles of the original grocery store stood.

Some of the historic charm that can be found in the building today is the original pressed tin ceiling which has been patched and painted, the original maple floor, which was found under two layers of other flooring and a beautiful exposed brick wall still standing strong.

While Kirsten and Mike did a lot of the work themselves, they had the help of family and friends as well as professionals like Clites Electric, Right Angle Construction, Verdon Roofing, Midstates Flooring, Preferred Woodworks and Midwest Glass. They sought out the expertise of Angela Boersma and Kevin Grunewaldt, and received a helping hand from the BEDC, Governor's Office and First Bank & Trust. The basement area was updated by Found – By Funky Junk to create a unique retail space for their work as well as items from other artists.



When asked about the process of remodeling the space, Kirsten said, "It had a lot of surprises, I'm very thankful to be in that space. There is still a lot of work we want to get done, like in the back space, we would like to put in a teaching kitchen in the future. There are

still challenges with any older building like water in the basement, but downtown Brookings is special because there are beautiful buildings that need to be taken care of and loved."

